

A L N W I C K

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PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS
OF THE
LOCAL AUTHORITY

Medical Officer of Health.. .B. Trevor-Roper, M.B., C.L.B., M.R.C.S.,
L.R.C.P.

Clerk of the Council.....Richard Rothwell, M.B.E.

Engineer and Surveyor.....Oswald M. Farrell, M.S.I.A., A.F.A.S.

Sanitary Inspector.....Rowland E. Dunn, A.R. San. I.,
Meat and Foods Inspector.

Old Court Buildings,
34 Green Batt,
ALNWICK,
Northumberland.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH -

1 9 5 2

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Report for 1952 is on the lines of those for previous years.

GENERAL STATISTICS

The Area of the District remains at 92,946 acres.

The number of Inhabited Houses is 3,954.
53 new Houses were erected during the year,
of which 17 were built by private enterprise
and 24 by the Air Ministry.

The Rateable Value is £51,679 and the sum
represented by a penny rate is £210.

The estimated mid-year Resident Population
is 11,790 and this figure is taken for
calculating the birth and death rates.

VITAL STATISTICS

Births.

The number of births - corrected for inward and
outward transfer was 157, of which 77 were males
and 80 females. This includes one still birth.

Ten of the births were illegitimate.

Birth Rate for 1952	-	13.3	per	thousand	per	annum
" " " 1951	-	15.0	"	"	"	"
" " " 1950	-	16.2	"	"	"	"
Birth Rate for 1952	-	17.3	"	"	"	"

(England & Wales)

Deaths.

The number of deaths - corrected for inward and
outward transfer - was 156, of which 78 were
males and 78 females.

Death Rate for 1952	-	13.2	per	thousand	per	annum
" " " 1951	-	13.4	"	"	"	"
" " " 1950	-	12.6	"	"	"	"
Death Rate for 1952	-	11.3	"	"	"	"

(England & Wales)

Infantile Deaths.

The number of deaths in infants under one year of
age was 3 (2 boys and 1 girl), all legitimate.

Infantile Death Rate for 1952	-	19.1	per	thousand	live	births
" " " " 1951	-	27.9	"	"	"	"
" " " " 1950	-	21.0	"	"	"	"
Infantile Death Rate for 1952	-	27.6	"	"	"	"

(England and Wales)

Causes of Death at All Ages.

Tuberculosis (Respiratory)	- 2	Pneumonia	- 4
Cancer of Stomach	- 7	Bronchitis	- 4
Cancer of Lung	- 4	Gastric & Duodenal Ulcer	- 2
Cancer of Breast	- 2	Gastro-enteritis	- 1
Other Malignant Neoplasms	- 14	Kidney Disease	- 3
Leukaemia	- 1	Congenital Malformations	- 3
Heart Disease	- 45	Motor Accidents	- 2
Other Circulatory Diseases	- 29	Other Accidents	- 6
Suicide	- 3	All other causes	-24

Infectious Diseases

The number of Infectious Diseases notified to me during the year was 64.

Measles	- 49	Whooping Cough	- 1
Scarlet Fever	- 7	Cerebro-Spinal Fever	- 1
Sonne Dysentery	- 3	Erysipelas	- 1
Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis	- 1	Influenzal Pneumonia	- 1

The case of Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis was of the non-paralytic variety.

Tuberculosis.

Eleven cases of Pulmonary and two cases of Non-pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified during 1952.

LOCAL HEALTH SERVICES.

The Alnwick Infirmary and Fever Hospital are situated in the Urban District, but their facilities are available for cases from the Rural Area. A Maternity Hospital is now functioning in the Town and takes cases from both the Urban and Rural Districts. Dental, Orthopaedic, Chest and Ante-natal Clinics are available and controlled by the County Council, as are the Ambulance, Nursing and Home Help Services. Owing to the fact that there is now practically no Diphtheria and the majority of the cases of Scarlet Fever are of a mild character, the Fever Hospital has been little used during the year.

The year 1952 has, in my opinion, been quite satisfactory from a health aspect, and there has not been any unusual or abnormal sickness or epidemics.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.Water Supply.

During the year work was in progress for re-arranging the Shilbottle/Warkworth pumping system at Shilbottle Colliery, including the provision of a new pump house, pumps, chlorination plant and alterations to mains in the Colliery Yard.

Work was also in progress on the relaying of larger sized distribution mains from the Shilbottle Hillhead Reservoir to the Farriers Arms Housing Site and to Shilbottle Old Village.

A water service was renewed to Embleton Low Mill and the Golf Club, and improved services given to Embleton School House and Embleton East Farm House.

During the year, difficulty was experienced in maintaining a supply to all of the Felton and District consumers, because of the small summer yield from the Swarland Shaft. A mobile fire pump supplied and operated by the R.A.F. at Cavil Head, boosting water from the Amble U.D.C. system was in operation from July to November, to serve Acklington and Togston.

It was again necessary during the summer to supply water by cart to the private houses in Foxton Drive, Foxton.

Work was in progress on Messrs. D. Balfour's Scheme of mains extension from Stamford to serve Longhoughton and Boulmer.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

Work was in progress (and nearing completion by the end of the year) on the construction of a permanent separate drainage system, i.e. a foul sewer and a stormwater drain to serve the ultimate requirements of the Warkworth Guilden Road Housing Site, together with a temporary small sewage disposal plant to serve the eight new Council Houses in Guilden Road and the Houses at Maudlin Farm, Warkworth.

A similar scheme of drainage (foul and stormwater) but no new disposal works was prepared and was the subject of an enquiry by a Ministry of Housing and Local Government Engineering Inspector, in respect of the Shilbottle Farriers Arms Housing Off-site Works, tenders being invited in December.

Arising out of these Shilbottle proposals, the Northumberland Rivers Board called attention to the overloaded condition of the existing works and asked for an assurance that the enlargement of the works, already a matter in hand by Messrs. D. Balfour & Sons, Consulting Engineers, should be undertaken as speedily as possible.

An Enquiry was also held by a Ministry of Housing and Local Government Engineering Inspector in respect of the Longhoughton sewerage scheme prepared by Messrs. D. Balfour & Sons.

Records show that 14 new installations of small sewage disposal works, in the form of septic tanks, have been completed during the year by private developers. Such installations are by no means the complete answer to the disposal of sewage from individual properties, but they must be accepted, if any progress is to be made in the modernisation of isolated houses.

Closet Accommodation

In existing properties 19 new water closets have been provided during the year. In 12 cases, the Council made a grant of £10. 0. 0. towards the cost of the conversion from the conservancy system. Abolition of 4 privies, 5 pails and 3 ash closets has resulted from these conversions, but the total figure is little more than one quarter of what were converted in 1951. This may, of course, be a reflection of the general shortage of money which has been apparent in other circles.

Public Scavenging.

The Council continued to operate two collecting vehicles for the removal of refuse and nightsoil. A steady increase in the number of new houses being completed in the District, applied more and more pressure on the service, and with the shortening hours of daylight towards the end of the year, the difficulties became acute.

In view of the large number of new houses being built or contemplated, including Air Ministry Married Quarters, the Council agreed to the purchase of an additional vehicle to commence operation at the beginning of the next financial year.

Housing.

Twelve permanent houses were completed by Contractors on behalf of the Council, while private and other bodies completed forty-one, of which twenty-four were built for the Air Ministry as Married Quarters.

During the same period twenty-four houses were demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders, on properties condemned before the late War, while a further fifty-five houses were permanently discontinued as dwellings and rendered uninhabitable

In conjunction with the survey for sewerage and sewage disposal, the following provisional categorisations, under the Rural Housing Survey, have been made:-

		<u>C A T E G O R Y</u>				
		1	2	3	4	5
Parish of	Broxfield	-	-	1	3	-
"	" Hauxley	-	13	50	130	61
"	" Rennington	-	12	13	22	8
"	" Rock	9	6	26	4	9
"	" Warkworth	125	47	98	47	19
		134	78	188	206	97

The categories have the following significance:-

1. Satisfactory in all respects.
2. Minor Defects.
3. Requiring repair, structural alteration and improvement.
4. Appropriate for re-conditioning.
5. Unfit for habitation and beyond repair at reasonable expense.

Under the Housing Act, 1949, three applications for grant aid were submitted and considered, but none was approved.

While most property owners are apparently aware of the provisions of this Act, they continue to avoid application for its advantages presumably because of outweighing disadvantages. It appears significant that, while many agricultural cottages have been reconditioned, few have been done so with the aid of a Housing Act Grant.

Food Inspection.

The following foods were examined, condemned and surrendered. Condemnation Certificates were issued in respect of:-

Canned Goods.....127 cans
 Bacon..... 45½ lbs.
 Sugar..... 2 cwts.
 Canned Hams.....131 lbs.
 Dried bulk..... 1 cwt.

The notable increase in unsound hams is somewhat disturbing, not only for the loss of food, but for the loss by gross carelessness. At least half of the cans condemned were punctured with nail holes, which could only be attributed to careless crating.

Cowsheds and Dairies.

Of the 239 farms in the District, the Milk Regulations Officer reports that 102 are registered for milk production. There have apparently been no changes since the previous year.

There are 5 registered distributors supplying milk in the District.

The Council issued 1 Supplementary Licence for the retailing of Pasteurised Milk in the District.

Ice Cream.

No ice cream is manufactured in the District, but during the year, 3 new registrations were approved under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, bringing the total of premises registered for storage and sale of ice cream to 30. In addition, there are a number of vans, operating from adjoining Districts, which retail loose ice cream in this District. No complaint has been received regarding vans or premises, and inspections of refrigerator cabinets at 14 registered premises has revealed no unsatisfactory conditions.

Byelaws.

The Council made and had confirmed, Byelaws under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, with respect to the Handling, Wrapping and Delivery of Food. Copies of these Byelaws are being distributed free during routine or special inspections of Food Premises.

Rodent Control.

The following is a summary of the Annual Report on the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, which has already been submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture:-

	<u>Type of Property</u>				Total
	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	Agricultural	Business & Industrial	
1. Properties in District	26	3,365	841	315	4,547
2. " Inspected	26	123	117	52	318
3. " Rat Infested	20	75	36	9	140
4. " Mouse Infested	-	2	-	-	2
5. Notices served requiring treatment or structural works	-	-	1	3	4
6. Block Control - 14 treatments involving land and properties.					

Sanitary Inspection.

Summary of Inspections and re-inspections	No. of Visits	No. of Informal Notices	No. of Defects Remedied
Structural defects (houses)	93	31	38
Dampness	15	10	5
Overcrowding	6	1	1
Drainage (defective)	27	11	10
Food Premises	18	3	3
Slaughterhouses	5	-	-
Tents, vans, etc.	7	1	1
Factories	11	2	2
Keeping of Animals	4	2	2
Insanitary Ashpits	3	3	2
Offensive Accumulation	16	10	10
Totals	205	74	74

General Inspections	No. of Visits
Refuse Depots	27
Rodent Control	8
Fumigations	3
Public Conveniences	3
Petrol Storage	5
Nuisances (actual & alleged)	46
New Drainage (including re-inspections)	21
Total	113

Disinfestation.

Only one case of flea infestation was dealt with by the Sanitary Inspector and no other complaints were received.

Disinfection.

Fumigation of rooms, bedding, etc., after infectious disease, was carried out directly by the Sanitary Inspector in only two cases and disinfection of County Library Books was necessary in one instance.

Factories.

There has been no change in the number of factories, 20 being "non-power" and 31 having mechanical power available. During 11 visits, mainly in connection with complaints received from the Factories Inspector, the principal shortcomings were insufficiency of, or lack of, cleanliness in closet accommodation. No formal notices were required to remedy these defects.

Naming of Streets and Numbering of Houses.

Under the Towns Improvement Clauses Act, 1847, the naming of streets in Alnmouth having been carried out, numbering of the houses therein was carried out during the year. Agreement was also reached with the Parish Councils of Shilbottle and Togston regarding street names and numbering of houses, but the requisite Notices had not been served by the end of the year.

(Signed) B. TREVOR-ROPER,
Medical Officer of Health.